



2018 XSB JANUARY STORMS CA-RTF-4 DEPLOYMENT AAR

BY: CAPTAIN ROBERT SEPULVEDA, JR.
RTF-4 COORDINATOR





FACILITY ORIENTATION



- Restrooms
- Water
- Electronic devices (silent)
- Portable Radios (off/low)
- Introductions



SCENARIO SUMMARY



- On January 9, 2018 at approximately 0315 hours, a heavy storm cell entered the Thomas Fire burn area of Santa Barbara, Montecito, and Carpinteria resulting in a catastrophic mudslide/debris flow. The slide created 3 main rivers of mud in the Cold Spring, San Ysidro, and Romero Creeks that destroyed hundreds of structures, wiped out the utility infrastructure, multiple blocked roads including US HWY 101 and resulted in 23 deaths.



CA US&R HISTORY



La Conchita Mudslide: January 2005





RTF-4 MOBILIZATION EXERCISE



On January 10, 2018, RTF-4 was participating in a mobilization exercise in Castaic from 1000-2200 hours.

RTF-4 was actively engaged in heavy breaking and breaching operations when the team was pre-alerted by Verdugo Fire Communications.





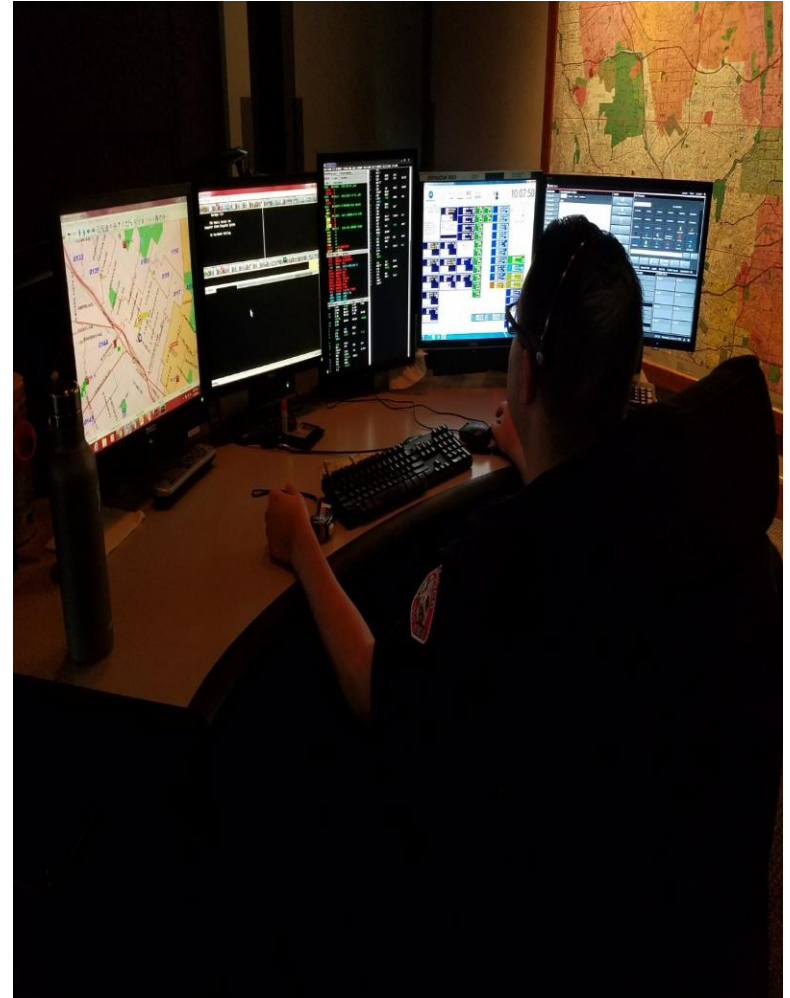
VERDUGO FIRE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER



On January 10th, at 1623 hours, OES notified Region 1 and requested CA-RTF-4 to the incident.

VFCC was notified at 1734 hours by Region 1.

RTF-4 was dispatched at 1744 hours from Del Valle Training Center to Santa Barbara.





VERDUGO FIRE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER



Page: 1 of 1
Run Date: 1/10/2018 19:36 CST
Server: rossreport@smg.gov

RESOURCE ORDER		Initial Date/Time		2. Incident / Project Name				3. Incident / Project Order Number				Financial Codes					
OVERHEAD		01/07/18 1900		2018 XSB JANUARY STORMS				CA-MTO-000071				MMA - MASTER MUTUAL AID [P] CDAA					
5. Descriptive Location Hwy 101 to Las Positas Road, North to intersection of Las Positas and Calle Real (frontage road). Address: 3400 Calle Real, Santa Barbara, CA 93105				6. TWIN		RNG		SEC		Base MDM		8. Incident Base / Phone Number					
				4N		27W		17		San Bernardino, CA		SB EXPANDED 805-681-5504 SBC Expanded 805 681 5504 CA-XSBC (Dispatch) 805-692-5735 Duty Officer CA-XSBC (Dispatch) 805-692-5723 Dispatch					
				LAT. 34 25 47 N		LONG. 119 44 09 W						10. Ordering Office Santa Barbara County Operational Area Coordination					
11. Aircraft Information																	
Bearing	Distance	VOR	Contact Name	Frequency Type	Assigned Frequency	Reload Base	Other Aircraft / Hazards										
148	5	RZS	VFIRE 26	Tactical	154.3025 156.70	SBA											
95	19	GVO	VFIRE 24	Tactical	154.2725 156.70	SMX											
279	34	CMA	VFIRE 23	Tactical	154.2950 156.70												
			VFIRE 22	Tactical	154.2650 156.70												
				Command	154.9950 TX SBC Com-2 127.30												
				Command	153.9050 RX SBC Com-2 110.90												
			MT0 Tac-3	Tactical	153.8300 123.00												
			Victor	Air to Air	122.9												
			VFIRE 25	Tactical	154.2875 156.70												
			Calcord	Tactical	156.0750												
12. Request Number	Ordered Date/Time	From	To	Qty	Resource Requested	Needed Date/Time	Deliver To	From Unit	To Unit	Assigned Date/Time	Resource Assigned Unit ID	Resource Assigned	M/D Ind	Estimated Time Of Departure	Estimated Time Of Arrival	Released Date	Released To
O-113	01/10/18 1623 PST	SBC Expanded 805 681 5504	CA-XSBC	1	Urban Search and Rescue Team, Type 1	01/10/18 2000 PST	Earl Warren Showgrounds (Santa Barbara, CA)	CA-XLCC	CA-XSBC	01/10/18 1734 PST	CA-XLCC	USAR RTF-4 Regional Task Force 4 (CA-XLCC)	M	01/10/18 1735 PST	01/10/18 1935 PST		
Travel Mode		Financial Code CDAA		Special Needs Per OES Chief Messer: If CDAA Approved using CFAA methods. For 30-man Region Task Force.				Reporting Instructions									
13. User Documentation																	
Req. No.	Documentation														Entered By		
O-113	Request O-113 - Urban Search and Rescue Team, Type 1 - [CA-MTO-000071] 2018 XSB JANUARY STORMS has been filled with USAR RTF-4 Regional Task Force 4 (CA-XLCC) by Melissa Leary@CA-XLCC ROSS.														Melissa Leary (CA-XLCC) 01/10/2018 1734 PST		

2018 XSB JANUARY STORMS	CA-MTO-000071
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VERDUGO FIRE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER



• Strengths:

- Pre-alerted Area "C" when request came from Region 1.
- Dispatched RTF-4 within 10 minutes from the request.
- VFCC was evaluated on dispatching RTF-4 for Mobex 7 hours earlier.
- RTF-4 text group was utilized with all info needed (no MDC).

Areas for improvement/recommendations:

- When filling out ROSS order, ensure that there are 30 technical specialist and the RTF-4 dispatch footprint.
- Continue to participate in quarterly RTF-4 drills and include ROSS order for drills.
- Utilize RTF-4 daily roster for ROSS/personnel info (TFL/ATFL)
- Travel route was never addressed with roads/fwy closed.



CA US&R REGIONAL TASK FORCES DEPLOYED



- CA RTF 1: Marin County/XMR
- CA RTF 2: Downey/XLE
- CA RTF 3: Long Beach/XLF
- CA RTF 4: Pasadena /XLC
- CA RTF 5: Fresno/FRN
- CA RTF 6: San Bernardino County/ XSB
- CA RTF 7: Ventura County/City/OXD
- CA RTF 8: LA County/ XLB
- CA RTF 9: LA City/ XLA
- CA RTF 10: Orange County/XOR
- CA RTF 11: Bakersfield /BKF **UTF**
- CA RTF 12: Santa Barbara County/XSB



RTF-4 DEPLOYMENT



- **Strengths:**
 - Team was together at one location when dispatched (Castaic).
 - Team was already rostered with VFCC.
 - Team has deployment drills four times a year.
 - Team was warmed up from Mobex.
 - Team was well prepared and self-sufficient for 72 hours.
 - Team assignments were made at Del Valle.
 - Structural Specialist





RTF-4 DEPLOYMENT



- **Area for improvement/recommendations:**

- Had to find a BC with STEN qualifications.
- Encourage BC's to take US&R Regional Task Force Leader.
- Encourage all 7 agency BC's to attend RTF-4 quarterly drills.
- US&R 32 didn't have sleeping bags/cots.
- US&R 32 had to a crew swap (internal staffing needs) which delayed enroute time.
- Entire footprint had to stop and get fuel in Santa Paula (1hr).





LARGE AREA SEARCH



On January 11, 2018 RTF-4 was assigned to "Carpinteria Branch" for large area search in Toro Canyon.

Strengths:

- BoO was set up in a great location.
- All 5 all terrain vehicles (ATV's) were used for search.
- Four search teams were deployed.
- Search Manager kept one TSS for documentation.





LARGE AREA SEARCH



Strengths:

- Search Teams used GPS correctly.
- Primary and secondary search was completed in the entire geographical area.
- RTF-4 presented a search report to Division Supervisor with all of our findings with maps and GPS.
- Structural Specialist assessed damaged structures.

Area for improvement/recommendations:

- Decon plan for team.





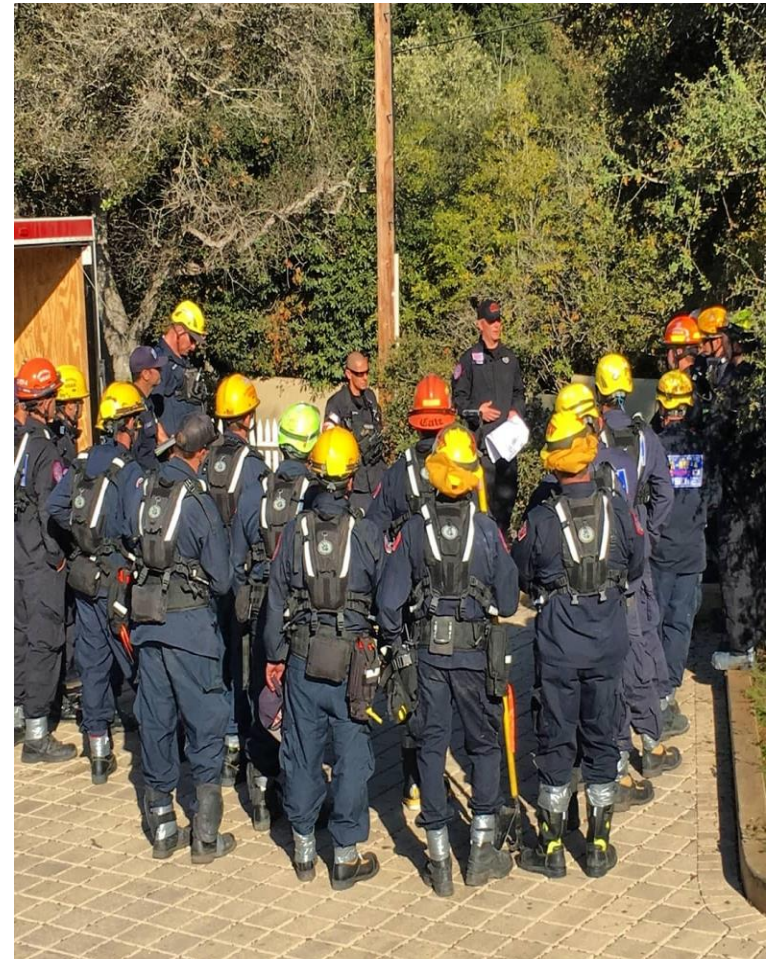
LARGE AREA SEARCH



On January 12, 2018 RTF-4 was assigned to East Branch, South Division for large area search in Montecito for the next 5 days.

Strengths:

- BoO was set up at a school parking lot shared with RTF-8.
- Team briefings were conducted every day with objectives.
- Seven search teams were deployed.
- Heavy equipment was acquired.





LARGE AREA SEARCH



Strengths:

- Search report were given to Division Supervisor.
- K9's were used from RTF-9.

Area for improvement/recommendations:

- Report findings to base camp with sit/stat unit.
- Request heavy equipment if needed.
- Look into K-9 search team for RTF-4.





LARGE AREA SEARCH



On January 15, 2018 RTF-4 was tasked with primary/secondary search (extrication) of heavily damaged vehicles.

RTF-4 searched and located 38 vehicles with 6 vehicles extracted and extricated using an excavator from Cal Trans.

RTF-4 **VICTIMS**

#	WP / GPS	NOTES / TIME	PLATE/VIN	#	WP / GPS	NOTES / TIME	PLATE/VIN
1	1041 58105 14015	Van WHITE	CA-7D4458	21	005 5712 13713	Grey Mercedes	7MPF884
2	001-115K45189 4-3 13811	Silver Toyota Camry	P-7BPM125	22	007 5725 13415	White Tesla	
3	002-115K45189 4-3 13846	Blue Grey BMW wagon	P-6PMZ189	23	000 5727 13415	White SUV	WCC138
4	003-115K45189 4-3 13851	Green Ford Bronco	P-6K4B711	24	001 5725 13651	Black BMW	7AL2001
5	004-115K45189 4-3 13846	Grey Audi GL	P-7SL1715	25	002 5725 13734	Toyota 4 Runner	
6	005-115K45189 4-3 13811	Silver BMW 335	P-5LH063	26	003 57124 14134	Grey Mercedes	YVSE52747 84716
7	006-115K45189 4-3 13811	White Mercedes SUV	P-3HMS W366	27	004 5712 14015	White Jeep	WOODCH1345F 07254
8	007-115K45189 4-3 13775	White BMW Sedan	P-6W4D18	28	005 5712 13637	Blue Cherry R	
9	008-115K45189 4-3 13775	Blue Jetta Wagon	P-6FYK54	29	006 5712 14015	White Jeep	
10	009-115K45189 4-3 13775	Blue/Grey VW Van	P-7K6766	30	007 5712 13738	Black Toyota	
11	010-115K45189 4-3 13719	Grey Acura SUV	P-6P8785	31	008 5712 13738	Forester	WPC4V416 40504W
12	011-115K45189 4-3 13719	Blue Tesla	P-7211521	32	009 5712 13682	SUV ?	
13	012-115K45189 4-3 13842	Silver Mercedes SL 500	P-5F4E457				
14	013-115K45189 4-3 13842	Green Lexus 350	P-6DFU154				
15	014-115K45189 4-3 13842	Unaffected - Driveway	P-7N3F365				
16	015-115K45189 4-3 13842	Black Bentley Continental	P-44AA424				
17	016-115K45189 4-3 13842	White VW Bug	P-6L0840 437 650				
18	017-115K45189 4-3 13842	Silver Ford Flex	P-6X0011 51721				
19	018-115K45189 4-3 13900	Unaffected	P-4H1021				
20	001-57216 57-2 13787	Blue Acura SUV	W40K778				
21	002-57216 57-2 13787	Silver Honda SUV					
22	003-57216 57-2 13787	Blue BMW SUV	5LH063				
23	004-57216 57-2 13787	MIATA	3LW43490 41177				
24	005-57216 57-2 13787	Audi	W40K778				
25	006-57216 57-2 13787	Silver Toyota					
26	007-57216 57-2 13787	Mercedes Silver	W40K778				



LARGE AREA SEARCH



Strengths:

- BoO was relocated closer to the operational area.
- Search teams used GPS, obtained vehicle make/models, license plate and vin numbers to track where vehicles came from.
- Used gators and utilities to transport extrication equipment and personnel.





LARGE AREA SEARCH



Strengths:

- Search manager tracked all information and put another search report for Division Supervisor. All info was sent electronically to sit/stat using RTF-4 g-mail account.
- Excavator was acquired.
- Gulf and Charlie strike teams were used to continue large area search.
- Structural Specialist assessed damaged structures.





LARGE AREA SEARCH



Area for improvement/recommendations:

- Search teams started covering areas that were already searched duplicating the information which confused the Search Manager.
- Search teams should use colored flagging tape to tag vehicles so it's confirmed by other search teams that the vehicles have already been searched.





LARGE AREA SEARCH



On January 16, 2018, Five RTF's had already been demobed from the incident.

RTF-4 had completed their mission and covered primary and secondary search of the entire "South Division" and took advantage of the time to start decon of personnel, equipment, and K9's.





RTF-4 ORG CHART



TASK FORCE LEADER (1)
CERWIN
951-288-1037

ASSISTANT SAFETY OFFICER (1)
ORTIZ
909-957-2039

ASSISTANT TASK FORCE LEADER (1)
SEPULVEDA
323-497-4259

SEARCH MANAGER (1)
MALOUF
909-730-2305

RESCUE MANAGER (1)
N/A

USAR MEDIC (2)
1. FETNER
2. MATSUMOTO

TOOL & EQUIPMENT SPECIALIST (3)

USR32: WHITE

USR22: DAWSON

USR106: HARVEY

TECHNICAL SEARCH
SPECIALIST (2) (RECON TEAM)

1. PARK
2. CLINE

RESCUE TEAMS
N/A

SEARCH TEAMS
1. LESSIS/CAFFEY/OCONITRILLO/ZUNIGA/MELBORNE
2. GENOVESE/CLARIDGE/HARDYMENT/MEDINA/EDWARDS
3. TWITCHELL/HARVEY/MATSUMOTO/CATE/BUCCOLA/MITCHELL
4. BROWN/HERRERA/NOVELLA/FETNER/TERRY/IRWIN

HAZ-MAT SPECIALIST (2)

1. HARDYMENT
2. CLARIDGE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT RIGGING
SPECIALIST (1)
IRWIN

K9 SEARCH SPECIALIST (2)

1. OES

STRUCTURAL SPECIALIST (1)
MELBORNE

ADVANCE TEAM PERSONNEL:

TFL OR ATFL (1)
SEARCH MGR (1)
RESCUE MGR (1)
TSS (2)
ASO (1)

ADVANCE TEAM APPARATUS:

UT63 (BoO, GATOR 1, GATOR 2)
BC3 OR U37 (TFL OR ATFL)



INCIDENT ISSUES



- IMT was operating the incident with a brush fire mentality.
- More heavy equipment was needed on the incident.
- RTF's felt that a US&R Operations Chief was needed at the ICP.
- RTF's didn't agree what was being called "secondary search".
- Search/Victim/Building markings were wrong from the initial action companies resulting in RTF's to mark correctly. Spray painted homes not damaged.



INCIDENT ISSUES



Search Marking Stickers

When using a search sticker, it should be placed at the main entrance to the building. Search teams will use the information box to add additional information on coverage level and other critical information such as location of hazards and gaps in coverage.

If additional searches are performed on the same structure, search teams will place a new search sticker **next** to the original. They must lightly mark out the original search sticker. It is important not to erase or remove the search history of a structure.

A green search marking sticker for a primary search. It features a large black 'X' across the center. Handwritten information includes: '6/17/11' for Date of Exit, '1500' for Time of Exit, 'VA-TF1' for Task Force, '6/17/11' for Date of Entry, and '1300' for Time of Entry. There is a section for 'Hazards' and a large box for 'Areas searched if incomplete'. At the bottom, there is a 'SEARCH MARKING LEGEND' with a table of search status and coverage levels.

SEARCH MARKING LEGEND	Incomplete Search/No Entry	Completed Search
2-24	2-24	2-24
1-24	1-24	1-24
1-24	1-24	1-24
1-24	1-24	1-24

A green search marking sticker for a secondary search. It features a large black 'X' across the center. Handwritten information includes: '6/19/11' for Date of Exit, '1300' for Time of Exit, 'TX-TF1' for Task Force, '6/19/11' for Date of Entry, and '0900' for Time of Entry. There is a section for 'Hazards' and a large box for 'Areas searched if incomplete'. At the bottom, there is a 'SEARCH MARKING LEGEND' with a table of search status and coverage levels.

SEARCH MARKING LEGEND	Incomplete Search/No Entry	Completed Search
2-24	2-24	2-24
1-24	1-24	1-24
1-24	1-24	1-24
1-24	1-24	1-24



INCIDENT ISSUES



- RTF's came with large apparatus (footprints) and incident base was unable to support the parking.
- Incident maps didn't correlate with what RTF's were seeing in their divisions.
- When RTF's were relocated to different divisions, no intel was passed on to what was completed on the prior operational period causing RTF's to start from scratch.
- Information/location of the last point seen of victims was never relayed to RTF's.
- Soil sample results were never given to RTF's.



INCIDENT ISSUES



- K9's were having issues searching in mud.
- ROSS qualifications for US&R positions differ from CICC'S (TFL vs US&R TFL)
- DIVS didn't know how to utilize RTF's.
- Incident Support Team (IST) was needed.
- RTF's felt that they should've spiked out on the line because of the large footprint.



INCIDENT CHALLENGES



- Pie crust pools covered with mud
- Man hole covers missing covered with mud
- Fecal/urine/body fluid contaminates
- Natural gas leaks
- Collapsed structures
- 4 to 8 feet of mud
- Deceased human/animals
- Sharp objects (glass/metal/wood etc.)



INCIDENT CHALLENGES



- Electrical/power lines down
- Unstable trees (snags)
- Large to extreme rocks
- Unstable debris piles
- Heavy equipment
- Street/highway access blocked with debris



TASK FORCE LEADER



- Footprint very large, but can be managed if known area we will be working.
- RTF-4 were pre-deployed to MobEx– not realistic, with this deployment, not an issue.
- All US&R's should have UHF and VHF portable and mobile.
- Having equipment related to mud – waders, rubber boots, disposable cover-all's.
- Deployment was receptive to flexibility within incident, but at times needed to re-establish objectives within operational needs and equipment limitations.



TASK FORCE LEADER



- RTF-4 needs to operate within the incident if set up i.e.: fuel, meals, supply.
- Base camp could not handle the foot print of all resources within base camp, off base housing resulted.
- RTF-4 used U-TAC as coms and incident communication plan wanted all RTF's on VHF. Area C units need to be reminded outside Area C, we cannot use our direct channels (Example Red 10).
- Advanced teams were discussed but not needed based on incident operational period.



TASK FORCE LEADER



- Travel- known to have access problems- should've given us instructions on how to access area through closed freeway/roads. TFL called OES and received information necessary to enter area. Should have come from incident base/dispatch.
- Having a base set up or forward BOO really makes a difference. Even better would be to leave resources in this area, if secure and not working 24 hour ops. Set up for next ops would be quicker and less work on the crews.
- On an incident like this or earthquake, each RTF should have a back hoe, dump truck and dozer assigned to them for quicker access to area search.



ASSISTANT TASK FORCE LEADER



- Made team assignments at Del Valle.
- Ensured that the operational objectives were being met.
- Supervised Search Manager and ASO (No RM).
- Acquired heavy equipment/K9's.
- Food/Water/Logistics
- ICS 213 and 214 for the team.
- Law enforcement contact.
- Communications with team.



ASSISTANT TASK FORCE LEADER



- Scouted for additional assignments throughout division.
- Team Welfare/Rehab
- Decon location
- Public Relations
- Turned in search reports to Division Supv/Sit Stat.
- Built relationships with other RTF's.
- PAS & GLN have to send TWO Captains.
- Kept the team motivated.



ASSISTANT SAFETY OFFICER



- Worked with Division Safety Officer.
- Scouted out safety hazards and made them known to team.
- Communicated with ATFL on safety hazard findings.
- Appropriate PPE for mud environment
- Accountability of team
- Decon Plan
- Poison oak (US&R22 personnel)



SEARCH MANAGER



- Coordinated search activities
- Used a scribe/logistics
- Team cohesiveness
- Attitudes
- Willingness to work/adapting
- Good Coms with Search Team Leaders
- Technical Search Specialist skills
 - Large area search
 - Gps
 - Mapping



TEAM LEADERS & PERSONNEL



- Team was safely aggressive.
- ICS was used correctly.
- Uniformity (patches, helmets, t-shirts)
- TFL must have US&R TFL class.
- Zero communication from incident base on what roads were closed.
- Consider a modified advance team/recon to scout a location for BoO.
- BoO worked great.



TEAM LEADERS & PERSONNEL



- ATFL had a thorough knowledge of how to utilize team.
- Great having E701 bringing up the rear of footprint when traveling.
- Lose the department patches on deployment as we are ONE team.
- Search teams were divided up perfectly.
- Gulf and Type 3 Strike Teams were very helpful.
- UTV's and 4x4 vehicles were a must!



INCIDENT PHOTOS





INCIDENT PHOTOS





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CA-RTF-4 MONTECITO





CA-RTF-4 FOOTPRINT





CA-RTF-4 DEMOB





CONCLUSION



- This was the first deployment for RTF-4 and the entire RTF system since the program was developed in 2005.
- Many lessons were learned from this incident (challenges/issues).
- RTF-4 and other RTF's worked great together.
- RTF-4 Deployment policy was put to the test and worked- 3 USAR calls in Area C while RTF-4 was deployed (US&R51 & US&R 71).
- RTF-4 deployment quarterly drills have paid off (training). 7 agencies truly working as ONE.
- RTF-4 logistics trailer is needed and in the works.



CONCLUSION



- Montecito can't receive more than .5 inches of rain.
- Staffing plan for next rain event for Montecito will be: 6 US&R RTF's, 2 SF/S&R, 4 Type 1 ST, 4 Type 3 ST, 8 Gulf ST, HEQ, and IMT.
- Ojai has been deemed for imminent mudslide/debris flow.
- RTF-4 must remain in a state of readiness.



RTF-4 EXECUTIVE BOARD



- PAS Batt Chief AC Brown- RTF-4 Program Manager
- PAS Captain Robert Sepulveda- RTF-4 Coordinator
- MPK Captain Richard Tullius- US&R Coordinator
- ARC Captain Joe Herrick- US&R Coordinator
- SGB Batt Chief Newton Ong- US&R Coordinator
- ALH Captain Mike Brown- US&R Coordinator
- GLN Engineer Dan Claridge- US&R Coordinator
- MRV Captain Chris Huson/Engineer Alex Arellano- US&R Coordinator



QUESTIONS?

